

GABRIEL AND HIS ADVENTURES.

CHAPTER IV.

THE PRINCESS HILDA SAPHRONARA DELECTANA.



AM now going to let my young reader have a peep at the beautiful Princess Hilda Saphronara Delectana, daughter of the great Magician who ruled over Sugar Loaf Town, and the admired of all admirers. Let us pass through these shining silver gates, straight up from the yellow sands of the shore, into the garden, where the palace of the Princess stands. It is built of ivory; and high above the rest of the building rises one tall, white, polished tower, standing cool and glistening against the green foliage of the trees and the deep blue of the sky. The gardens slope down in terraces to a large sheet of water, where numbers of snow-white swans swim gracefully amongst the water-lilies. Day and night, with melancholy drooping heads, these swans keep up a never-ending song, dreamy, soft, and melodious, like the murmuring of a distant waterfall. They are singing out their wrongs and the sorrows of their hearts. I must tell you what you would never guess: these swans are the disappointed lovers of the Princess, transformed into this unnatural shape by the enchanted waters of the lake. Poor gentlemen! they had come from all parts of the world, attracted by the fame of the Princess's beauty: each had entered the palace full of hope that he should find favour in her eyes, but she was hard to please; and, indeed, how could she give her heart away at a moment's notice?

Maddened by the magical glance of her flashing eyes, the disappointed suitor would rush wildly from her presence, and casting himself into the broad, smooth lake, attempt to drown himself and his sorrows together. But that was not so easy as he imagined; the waters refused to swallow him up, and the lilies stretched out their long arms, and wrapping them round his body, made it impossible to sink.

"How dare you stop me from drowning?" he would cry in his rage; "I seek oblivion in these waters."

"Oblivion?" sighed the lilies, taking no notice of his passion, "there

is no such thing as oblivion : that is a dream of the mad and the foolish."

After a while the unhappy man began to feel a change passing over him ; his toes were growing tight together, his arms began to feel bunchy, his neck stretched out like an elastic band, his chin grew in and his nose grew out, till he squinted horribly to find the end of it. Really, it was very strange ! he paddled his feet, and found they were webbed ; he stretched out his arms, and, lo ! they were wings ; he arched and curved his elastic neck, and, behold ! he was a swan !

There was no help for it now, and the new swan began to feel a little bit proud of his beauty, which he saw reflected in the water, and to make the best of his situation. Slowly swimming down the lake he joined his companions in misfortune, and helped to swell the mournful chorus that rose up without ceasing.

The transformation of her lovers caused the mischief-loving Princess the greatest amusement ; and as her father had no desire to see her married, she was allowed to say and do to her suitors exactly what she pleased. The Magician's love for his daughter was the one bright spot in his heart ; he delighted in her youth, her beauty, and her merriment, and though he taught her some of his magical arts, he did not wholly pervert her mind to evil.

The Princess came out one sunny morning to take her usual walk, followed at a respectful distance by her attendants. She was dressed in white, and the long silver veil, which was fastened in her hair, shone like a stream of running water. A basket was on her arm, for the Princess was going to feed the swans. They hailed her coming with a shriek of joy, and flying to the bank settled themselves in a long row, from one end of the lake to the other.

"How do you do, dears ?" cried the Princess, affably ; "I wish you all a very good-morning."

"Schrake ! schrake !" replied the swans, which stands for any polite salutation that you please.

It was a funny sight to see them sitting there with folded wings and outstretched necks ; such a long, long row of black beady eyes and yellow beaks, craning anxiously forward to catch a glance from the Princess. With perfect impartiality she gave a nod and a smile to each as she tossed a small cake into his open mouth. All were treated alike, and none could be jealous of the others. At one time the

Princess used to make a few kindly remarks, such as, "Well, Jem, you look uncommonly fresh and spruce this morning. Tippoo, I am afraid you have caught cold; I have heard you sneeze twice. Why, Alonso, you turn out your toes as if you had stood in the stocks all your life."

But she soon found that it would not do; like some children I have met, the swans would rather be scolded and ridiculed, than be passed by unnoticed. The quarrels were frightful after the Princess was gone; the swans that had not been spoken to nearly tore in pieces the swans that had been spoken to; so the Princess wisely gave up speaking to any, and contented them all with a nod and a smile. Her arm used to feel quite tired before she threw the last cake down the throat of the last swan; but she persevered to the end, as she was not sufficiently hardhearted to disappoint them so cruelly.

"Good-bye, dears; farewell, my pretty pets," she said, waving and kissing her hand to her flock of admirers.

The swans gazed after the Princess for several minutes; then throwing up their heads, and stretching out their wings with a gesture of despair, they shrieked out that old and mournful ditty, "Not for Joseph, not for Joe!" then taking a somersault backwards, fell with a heavy splash into the water.

"What shall we do now?" said the Princess; "I am tired of all my amusements."

"It is a long time since your highness has played at croquet," said one of the attendants.

"Oh, nonsense," cried the Princess impatiently; "I tried that one day last summer; you cannot expect me to play at the same game two years running. I know—we will make cheese-cakes; I used to make beauties when I was a child."

The Princess tossed her empty basket in the air, which was cleverly caught by one of the maidens, as a dog would catch a lump of sugar. Then they all stood in a circle, the Princess in the centre. It was a pretty sight to watch them spinning cheese-cakes on the lawn. The Princess held out her dress on each side, spun round for several seconds on her toes, and then sank gracefully to the ground, whilst her dress, swelled out by the air, rose in a white cloud above her head. The maidens followed her example, and she clapped her hands with delight. She seemed as if she never would get tired. The Princess

spun round, and the maidens spun round, till one after the other dropped exhausted on the ground, and the Princess was left alone spinning in the midst.

"Dear me, how soon they get tired!" said the Princess; but after a while she stopped too, and thought that it *was* a little hot and fatiguing.

As the maidens showed no signs of rising, the Princess clapped her hands, and twenty more young girls came running out.

"They are all so lazy," she said, pointing to the cheese-cakes, who were lying limp and flabby on the grass. "I want to have some more fun; let us see who can hop the longest."

Away they went all along the terraces, first on one leg, then on the other; the Princess taking the lead. It was impossible to catch her. At last, turning round to look behind, the Princess saw the hapless maidens lying on the ground like nine-pins, one after the other.

"They are a poor race," said the Princess, contemptuously; "I shall have to buy them some new legs. Happy thought! when they hang up their stockings on New-year's Eve, I'll put a new leg into each."

Finding herself almost breathless with her exertions, the Princess sauntered down to the silver gates of the palace garden: the yellow sands stretched beyond, and the long, low waves came hurrying up with soft laughter in the distance. A group of girls went chattering by, driving a string of patient and much-belaboured donkeys, laden with the cockles they had been picking up on the shore. The Princess rested her round white chin on the bar of the silver-gate, and thought in the following fashion:

"Those girls look merry and happy with their bare feet and blown-about hair. It must be very nice to paddle about on the shore, and poke out all kinds of queer monsters. I'm tired of being a Princess, I'm tired of my fine clothes, I'm tired of all my amusements, I'm tired of everything—but cockling, which I have never tried; but I'll begin to-morrow. I will buy some common, coarse clothes, and a good brown basket; and when the sun is up I will run off to the shore and back again, before those lazy ladies of mine have unbuttoned their sleepy eyelids. What is the use of being a Princess if I cannot be a fishing-girl when I like?"

Full of this strange new fancy, the Princess returned to the palace,

laughing in her sleeve; and after making a hearty luncheon off stewed nightingale tongues, cream cheese, and ices, she ordered her carriage to the door, and started for an afternoon's shopping.

CHAPTER V.

THE RESCUE.

GABRIEL had no desire to return to the busy world; but he lived for many months, as the old Hermit had done, in his mountain solitude, cultivating his garden, lighting his watch-fire at night, and poring over the musty old books he had collected in his travels. It was his custom to rise early in the morning, and take his books to a mossy ledge of rock, where he could watch the sun rise and the great ocean cast off his nightcap of mist, and throw from his wavy locks his curl-papers of foam upon the sand.

One day he noticed the graceful figure of a young girl standing upon the shore; she remained about an hour, and appeared to be collecting shells, which she carried in a basket. Gabriel watched her with interest, and felt quite lonely when she walked away and disappeared round a jutting piece of rock. The next morning Gabriel looked anxiously for his new friend, and he had not to look long, for she soon came tripping gaily round the corner. Gabriel did not read much that morning, nor many other mornings either; he could do nothing but watch this young girl, who came as regularly as the rising sun, and took a wonderful hold on his fancy. Now one morning, when the tide was low, the young girl seemed to find some great treasures on a piece of rock that rose some height above the level of the shore, not far from the water's edge. Gabriel watched her, bending on her knees, poking her fingers into the holes of the rock, very intent upon her work, and never noticing that the water was creeping, creeping round the rock on which she knelt. The tide was running in swift and strong, but she did not seem to think about it. Gabriel became very uneasy when he saw the water surrounding her: he rose and shouted, but the wind tossed his voice scornfully back; and the waves were roaring so close to her ears that she could not possibly catch a sound beyond the deep bass notes of old Neptune's song. Gabriel did not hesitate a moment longer, but scrambled down the mountain as fast as the steepness of the path would allow. At last he reached the

shore, and it was not till then that the girl became aware of her danger: she rose to her feet, and when she saw that the tide had flowed in and closed around her, she threw up her arms with a gesture of despair, then sank down and covered her face with her hands.

Gabriel ran to the water's edge, and first wading, then swimming, reached the rock, and taking the fainting girl in his arms, swam back to the shore, and laying her gently on the ground had soon the satisfaction of seeing her open her eyes. After feeling assured of her perfect safety, the girl thanked Gabriel with tears of gratitude for saving her life; and before they parted she begged to know his name, that she might ever keep him in grateful remembrance.

"My name is Gabriel," he replied, "and I live on the mountain."

It was only fair that he should ask for her name in return; but Gabriel was shy, and quite unaccustomed to ladies' society, and before he had made up his mind to speak, his beautiful companion said farewell, and whisked off, leaving him standing like one in a dream.

Gabriel could do nothing but think of this girl, who was certainly the most lovely creature he had ever seen. He could not forget how sweetly she had smiled at him through her tears, and he loved her on the spot.

I daresay my reader has guessed already that the girl whom Gabriel saved from drowning was no other than the Princess, who had successfully carried out her strange whim of disguising herself as a fishing-girl, and taking a daily walk at sunrise, unknown to her ladies and attendants, who would have been greatly shocked at their young mistress's undignified behaviour. Gabriel looked anxiously for her return the following day, nor was he disappointed. The Princess made her appearance every day as regularly as clockwork; and the society of Gabriel grew so pleasant to her, that she learned to look upon that hour spent in his company as the happiest in the day.

One thing annoyed Gabriel: he could not learn the name and history of his fair companion, and her reserve was all the more trying because he was so open himself, and ready to answer all her questions. As he spoke of his early life with the Hermit, his subsequent adventures and sad return, she listened with eager interest; but when he dwelt upon the great power of the Magician, and his influence for evil upon the unhappy inhabitants of the town, little knowing that he was addressing that Magician's daughter, the face of the Princess became

grave and troubled. She had not learned till now that there was wickedness in magic, and she had delighted in learning such arts as her father would teach her.

"Is there no safety but on the mountain?" she asked, anxiously.

"None," replied Gabriel.

"But is it not dull, lonely, dreary up there?" and the Princess looked up with a sigh, as if she were sure that she should find it so.

"Dull!" cried Gabriel, and a blaze of light lit up his face that filled the Princess with awe, and made her wonder what strange companionship he found above.

Slowly and gradually, she knew not how, her present life grew loathsome to her, and she longed to fly up the mountain too, and taste the pure pleasures that had brought that light into Gabriel's face; but how could she tell him that she was the daughter of the wicked Magician whom he dreaded so much!

At length, after a few weeks of pleasant intercourse, Gabriel told the Princess plainly that he dare not come down from his mountain any more; he had done so at peril to himself, to save her from drowning, and afterwards to show her the way to a higher and more perfect life: then he went on to speak of his true love for her, and entreated her to become his wife, and fly with him up the mountain.

"Gabriel," cried the Princess, with passionate bitterness, "you do not know to whom you are speaking. I am the Princess Hilda, the Magician's daughter."

Gabriel started, crying, "The Magician's daughter? alas! alas! what hope is there that she will leave her beautiful palace and luxurious life to share my narrow cave?"

Overcome with grief, Gabriel turned away and hid his face; a soft voice whispered in his ear, "Gabriel, dear Gabriel, I love you better than anything else in the world."

With a joyful cry, Gabriel grasped her hand, and they two fled up the mountain, as a righteous man once fled from the burning cities of the plain.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MAGICIAN.

FEAR, sorrow, and confusion reigned in the palace when they found that the Princess was missing; and the wrath of the Magician was

terrible to behold. The garden, the park, and the lake were searched, but all in vain. The town crier was sent round the town. "Oh yes! Oh yes!" cried the veteran, as he dangled his bell on the iron hook that served him for a hand. "Lost, a young and beautiful princess; disappeared last night at an early hour in the morning," &c., &c., &c. "Whoever will bring back the same shall be rewarded beyond his deserts."

People stopped and stared, but no one produced the Princess, which, knowing what we do, was not surprising. When the Magician found that he could not recover his daughter, and that his magic failed him in this emergency, his heart was filled with grief and rage, and he called in a voice of thunder for the Princess's attendants. Young and old they stood before him, waiting for their sentence; from the mistress of the robes to the sweeper of the back-stairs they all alike trembled in their shoes. A terrible silence followed the hasty scuffle of the women's feet, and during that brief five minutes the jet-black hair of the mistress of the robes turned white with anguish.

Then up rose the Magician in his wrath, and cried, "Cast them, one and all, into the enchanted lake!"

Vain were the struggles and the screams of these miserable women; but, strange to relate, as they sank into the water, out of the whirlpool and the bubbles there rose up a flock of ducks, black, grey, and white, according to their varying ages.

"Quack! quack! quack!" cried the attendants, as they stared at one another with breathless astonishment.

"Ah, mademoiselle," quacked a pert little maid of sixteen to the ex-French governess, "we see you for the first time in your true colours; allow me to admire the soft, silvery grey of your hair."

Yes, indeed, where were the rouge, the paint, and the dye, and the various devices for concealing the ravages of time? The white and grey ducks diligently dived under the water, and pretended to be seeking for food.

"Madam," cried the ex-French governess, with asperity, as she turned upon a snow-white duck, the late dancing-mistress, "I always felt assured that your girlish airs were affectation, and now I am convinced. Pardon me, if I ever failed to respect your superior years."

"Sisters," quacked the stately mistress of the robes, "cease this foolish bickering. Why should we add to our troubles? let us live in peace."

"Pax, pax," repeated the ducks, as they swam after their leader to meet the swans, who were advancing to greet them.

The Magician, having thus given vent to his anger, cast himself upon the ground and bemoaned his daughter for three days and nights: he would take no food, and refused wholly to be comforted. When the fourth day dawned, out of the dim twilight the form of a venerable old man, attired as a hermit, seemed slowly to grow before the hot, weary eyes of the Magician. The figure raised its hand as if to command attention, and when the lips moved a soft voice fell upon his ear, like an echo from a distant land.

"My son," said the old man, "I am sent in compassion to your love, your tears, and your sorrow. Your daughter's eyes have been opened, and she has fled up the mountain to escape from your evil influence. If you would find balm for your broken heart, go seek her there."

The vision slowly faded, and straightway the Magician rose, and in the strength of his love went weeping up the mountainside, crying "My daughter, my daughter!"

Oh, wonderful power of love! that led him up to that pure atmosphere, where the chains that bound him to the evil art of magic fell off and left him free; where the veil dropped from before his eyes, and he saw as he had never seen before. Shorn of his strength like a mighty man of old, the Magician stood on the summit of the mountain, a humbled and repentant man. Soft, tender joy filled the father's heart as his daughter tenderly embraced him, and gladly welcomed him to the home where she had found so much happiness.

"You love me, father," whispered Hilda; "you must love Gabriel, my husband, too."

The father looked at Gabriel searchingly, and his eye rested on the glittering diamond that was suspended from his neck. Stretching out his hands to heaven, he cried, "Justice must be done." Turning to Gabriel, he asked him if he knew who his parents were. Gabriel was obliged to confess his ignorance, and related the story of his mysterious appearance at the Hermit's cave.

"It is fortunate that I have met you," said the Magician, "for I alone can tell you the secret of your parentage. When I usurped the throne of the good King Adrian, I stole away his infant son, and had him carried up the mountain and placed at the Hermit's door. I would have killed the child but for the talisman which his father

had fastened round his neck, and which I had no power to touch. I see you wear it still; guard it for ever; it was your father's dying gift."

Gabriel stood silent with surprise; was he really the son of that great and good King Adrian? It was almost too good to be true. Ah, it is joy indeed for a child to learn that his parents have been loved and honoured in their generation!

"Waste not the precious time," cried the Magician; "return to your people, who have now no ruler; as for me, I intend to retire into the Hermit's cave, and seek to undo the evil I have done."

Gabriel sighed. "Must I indeed leave my mountain life? I would rather spend my days here than reign over a nation."

"Gabriel," replied the Magician, solemnly, "you must not shrink from the duties that are awaiting you, and which henceforth lie in the city below. Magic is crushed: win your people's hearts to the truth, and emulate the virtues of your father."

Gabriel hesitated no more; he returned to the city, and the people hailed him joyfully as the long-lost heir of the king they had adored.

Great was the joy of Hilda, not princess now, but queen, when, on entering the silver gates of the palace, by her husband's side, she saw two long rows of familiar faces waiting to receive her. On one side stood the lovers, and on the other the ladies and attendants, restored to their proper form, whilst the path was strewn with the feathers and soft white down of the ducks and swans, now delivered from bondage for ever. The waters of the lake were no longer enchanted, the reign of magic was over; and amidst the blessings of a grateful and happy people let us bid good-bye to Gabriel and his bride. G. P.

BURIED CITIES DISINTERRED BY ADVENTUROUS TOURISTS.



WHO stays at home in the summer? Certainly John Bull does not; and already before June was over this year the English migration to the Continent began. Then like a thunderclap came the proclamation of war, and the stream turned, and the peace-loving visitors rushed back in horror and indignation to their native shore. "It is an ill wind," says the proverb, "that blows nobody any good;" and if the continental innkeepers are ruined there are great rejoicings among their English brethren, keeping

"Some traveller who seeks for shelter,"
 My mother said, "from the storm;
 Go, Janet, and bid him enter,
 And heap the logs up warm."

A hasty voice at the threshold,
 A hasty foot on the stair,
 And a form at the open doorway,
 And a cry, and a sob, and a prayer.

My mother knelt in the firelight,
 Her arms round the stranger's neck;
 'Twas my father, my own dear father,
 Whom God had saved from the wreck.

This is the tale of my childhood,
 Which I read when the fire gets low;
 Don't cry; it was years ago, dear,
 Years upon years ago.

PAN.

THE GREAT MARQUIS.

CHAPTER XI.

"Now by my faith as belted knight;
 And by the name I bear,
 And by the bright St. Andrew's Cross
 That waves above us there—
 Yea, by a greater, mightier oath—
 And, oh, that such should be!
 By that dark stream of royal blood
 That lies 'twixt you and me—
 I have not sought in battle-field
 A wreath of such renown;
 Nor dared I hope on my dying day,
 To win the martyr's crown!"

ATTOUN: *Execution of Montrose.*



As the Marquis entered the Watergate, he met the magistrates of Edinburgh, the Burgher guard, and a rude cart drawn by a wretched-looking horse, and the common hangman driving it. The magistrates immediately put into his hand a copy of his sentence, which had been drawn up the day before. They had determined to give him no trial, declaring that he had already been

condemned five years before. The savage sentence which these usurpers and rebels had pronounced was as follows: That "James Graham" (they would not allow him any of his titles) was to be brought from the Watergate, bare-headed, on the hangman's cart, to the Tolbooth, the common prison of Edinburgh. That he was then to be taken to the Parliament House to receive his sentence, viz., to be hanged at the Cross of Edinburgh, with his book and declaration hung round his neck; and other particulars too disgusting to tell. Montrose read it through with perfect composure, and as he gave it back to the magistrates, told them that he was ready to submit to his fate, "while he regretted that his sovereign whom he represented in Scotland should be thus dishonoured." He then stepped into the cart; a high chair had been placed upon it, to which he was bound by ropes, with his hands behind him. The hangman then rudely pulled off his noble prisoner's hat, and mounting the horse, the sad procession moved through the city. The Covenanters had tied him down in this way, hoping in their vindictive cruelty that the people would throw stones at him, but they were disappointed. The inhabitants of Edinburgh pressed forward to gaze upon the man whom they had been taught to hold in such terror and hatred, but drew back, awed by the calm majesty of his bearing, by his expression of patient courage and dignity. Pity filled every breast; many even wept and blessed him, and the others preserved a reverential silence as he passed. But as they passed by the house of Argyle the procession stopped, that the spectators there might gaze longer at their illustrious victim and gloat over his sufferings. Leaning over the balcony were the Marquis of Argyle, his son Lord Lorne and his new bride, the Chancellor Loudon, and Johnstone of Warristoun. In that moment of exultation over a fallen enemy how little did they guess that the two Argyles, father and son, would both die by the axe, and that Warristoun was destined to undergo the same sentence to which he had condemned Montrose. But another was sitting beside these personages—the Countess of Haddington, the sister of the hero of Alderne and Alford, of that gallant youth who had loved Montrose so devotedly, the brave Lord Gordon. But she was most unworthy to be his sister: she, and she alone, insulted Montrose, and even spat upon him; so that a gentleman in the street shouted to her in return that it was she who deserved to sit on that cart for her vices, which were indeed notorious. When the cart stopped

the Marquis guessed at once the reason of the delay, and he looked up. His calm piercing eye met that of Argyle: the guilty nobleman quailed under his glance, and turned suddenly away. An English sailor in the street thereupon called out, "No wonder you start at his look; it is seven years since you have dared to look him in the face."

It was not till seven o'clock in the evening that they reached the Tolbooth, when the magistrates condescended to release their prisoner from his cramped position. But they had not done tormenting him. They sent to tell him that he must immediately come to the Parliament House, and hear his sentence. Montrose begged to know, first, whether they were acknowledged as a Parliament by the young king; and as they were not quite prepared to answer that question, they resolved, as it was Saturday, and late, to put off their further proceedings till Monday. They comforted themselves, however, for this delay by sending a deputation of ministers to lecture him about his sins and offences. The Marquis, who was suffering from fatigue, as well as from the wounds he had received in his last battle, now begged for a little peace; "for," he said, "the compliment you put on me to-day was a little tedious and fatiguing." At last they left him with the guards, for they would not let him remain alone for a moment, and went away much provoked at his apparent indifference to all their studied and persevering insults.

They continued to worry him during Sunday, accusing him of all sorts of crimes, and telling him that if he would confess that he had been wrong in fighting for his sovereign, the Kirk would take off his sentence of excommunication. Montrose firmly refused to do this, and he at last told them plainly that he considered their exhibition of the day before as a triumphal progress, and that his Heavenly Father had supported and comforted him throughout.

On Monday morning his persecutions began again; a deputation of the ministers came to him about eight o'clock, in order to point out to him all the various offences of which he was supposed to be guilty. Montrose answered each separate accusation calmly and temperately. When they told him that his natural temper was lofty and aspiring, he replied that God had not made all men alike; some were grave and slow, others eager and high-spirited, and he candidly confessed "that he was one of those who loved praise for virtuous actions." After defending himself on other points, he came to their last and chief accusation, his having broken the Covenant. Montrose asserted that

the Covenant *he* had taken he had always kept; but when they took up arms in rebellion against the king, he thought it his duty to oppose them.

At last they went away, finding themselves baffled at all points; but before leaving their prisoner, they told him that they had come with the intention of releasing him from his sentence of excommunication if he had been penitent, but as it was, *that* was impossible, and they also hinted to him that his eternal as well as his temporal interests were in a very bad state.

The Marquis, with his usual courteous manner, replied that "he was very sorry if any actions of his had been offensive to the Church of Scotland, and he would heartily have wished to be reconciled to her, but since that could not be, without his acting against his conscience, there was no help for it."

A short time was allowed him to snatch a scanty breakfast, and he was then summoned to the bar of the Parliament House to hear his sentence. Not having been allowed the means of shaving since his capture, his moustaches and beard had grown long and straggling, and it was observed that, though serene and calm as usual, he looked pale and worn. As the Parliament professed to have the king's sanction, Montrose took off his hat at the bar and stood patiently to listen to a long and tedious speech by the Chancellor Loudon, chiefly in abuse of the prisoner. When he had done the Marquis asked whether he might say anything in defence of himself, and leave having been given him, he made an admirable reply to Loudon's charges in a speech which is deeply touching and interesting, but too long to be repeated here. But he ended by the following solemn appeal: "And be not too rash, but let me be judged by the laws of God, the laws of nature and nations, and the laws of this land. If otherwise, I do here appeal from you to the righteous Judge of the world, who one day must be your judge and mine, and who always gives out righteous judgment."

But they were too much blinded by their passions and their cold, hard bigotry to understand what righteous judgment meant.

Loudon made another speech, much like the first, and the Marquis was then commanded to kneel and hear his sentence. He obeyed with a calm and untroubled brow, while Johnstone of Warristoun read his doom: he sighed once or twice; the only signs of emotion he gave. One of his great enemies, Sir James Balfour, who was present, could not

refrain from saying, "He behaved himself all this time in the House with great courage and modesty, unmoved and undaunted; at the reading of the sentence he lifted up his face without speaking a word." He was now led back to prison, when the Presbyterian ministers followed him and renewed the old attack. Montrose was now thoroughly tired out with their importunities, and longed for a little rest. He turned away from them, saying, "Gentlemen, I pray you let me die in peace." But they were too much lost to every feeling of consideration to leave him alone, and began to talk over his sentence, adding to the horrors of it by their remarks. The Marquis then declared that he considered it an honour having his head placed over the gate of the city; a greater honour than having his picture hung in his royal master's bed-chamber. They quitted him at last, but none of his friends were allowed to come near him, and guards were placed in his room, so that he had not an instant of privacy. He seemed not to care for their presence, and having passed a great part of the night in prayer, he lay down and slept quietly and calmly till morning.

That morning broke at last, a bright May morning; the Canongate was early disturbed by the sound of drums and trumpets, which roused the hero from his last sleep on earth. Being thus startled from his slumbers he called to the captain of the guard and asked what the noise was. "The city-guards were being called out," they told him, "lest the malignants, his friends, should try and rescue him." He smiled at the explanation, and said, "What! do I who have been such a terror to these worthies during my life still continue so formidable to them now that I am going to die?"

The tender care of Lady Napier and Lady Stirling of Keir had provided him with carefully chosen garments for this mournful day. It was the last office of affection from those loving hearts, from the wife and the sister of his dearest friend, for the Lady of Keir was the niece, not the sister of Montrose, as I erroneously stated at the beginning of this history.

As the Marquis was dressing himself, Johnstone of Warristoun impudently walked in. The former happened to be combing his long hair at the moment, and Johnstone, with his usual insolence, asked him what he was about. Our hero smiled at the question and said, "While my head is my own I will dress and adorn it; when it is yours you can do what you please with it."

But the hour had arrived, and now their victim was brought out to die. He was richly, even magnificently dressed :

“Like a bridegroom from his room,
Came the hero from his prison
To the scaffold and the doom.
There was glory on his forehead,
There was lustre in his eye;
And he never walked to battle
More proudly than to die.”

Not one friend was allowed to be with him, but, though cut off from all earthly comfort, a mightier help was nigh, and he mounted the scaffold with a firm step and a calm and noble bearing. He stood on the high platform and looked round the Grass-market, crowded with the pitying multitude, but he was not allowed to speak to them. He then turned to the ministers and other officials, and said some parting words to them, which they listened to impatiently. He said that he was ready to die, and that he willingly forgave those who had murdered him. He never repented his services to the king, for his conscience told him that he had done right. He knew well he had sinned, but he cast himself on the mercy of his Heavenly Father, and in humble faith and earnest hope he trusted himself to his Redeemer, for that He had given him strength against the fear of death, and “had furnished him with courage and confidence to embrace it even in its most ugly shape.” They told him to pray apart. “I have already done so,” he replied; “I have already poured out my soul before the Lord who knows my heart; into His hands I commend my spirit, and He hath been graciously pleased to return to me a full assurance of peace in Jesus Christ my Redeemer.”

Dr. Wishart, his friend and chaplain, who had followed him through most of his campaigns, and shared his hardships, had written a short account of his first enterprise; this composition, together with a declaration he had published at Breda, were now brought, and fastened round his neck as another insult. He helped to tie them himself, and remarked, “I did not feel more honoured when his Majesty gave me the Garter.”

This was the last indignity with which his enemies tried to wound his high spirit. But they little knew the power of that grace which could make that impetuous and sensitive heart gentle and firm to bear

all indignity and insult, and could enable him to meet a disgraceful and painful death like a Christian and a hero.

The last moment had come, but it was soon over, and the noble and fearless spirit of the great loyalist passed to its long home.

CHAPTER XII.

"But the morn breaks—a morning without clouds,
A clear calm shining, when the rain is o'er;
He lieth where no mist of earth enshrouds,
In God's great sunlight wrapped for evermore.

C. F. ALEXANDER.

So died the Great Marquis of Montrose, and long years have passed away since his murderers have been also laid in the grave; but even now his memory is loved by those who have studied well his character. It was not for his victories, for his great actions alone, that he was so adored by those who knew him; it was his kindness, his gentleness, his courtesy, his piety and real goodness that endeared him to all who were brought into close contact with him. There is an account of him existing, which was written by a friend of his, Patrick Gordon of Cluny. Patrick says that he was "an accomplished gentleman, of many excellent parts;" also, that he was grave and quiet-looking, with very bright sparkling eyes, which used to kindle up when he was speaking, or was animated about anything. His manner, adds Patrick, was so winning, that he fascinated everybody, and "he made a conquest of the hearts of all his followers, so that he could have led them in a chain."

You know how fondly Lord Gordon and young Napier loved him, and it is recorded of Gordon that he was heard to declare, that if Montrose were defeated and obliged to fly alone to the mountains, he would leave everything to follow him. But Gordon died, and Montrose was left to weep his loss.

His martial accomplishments were not the only ones he possessed; he was devoted to literature and corresponded with literary men. He amused himself now and then by writing poetry himself, and during the busy time which followed the battle of Kilsyth he found leisure to write to an author-friend of his, Drummond of Hawthornden, about "Irene," a play which that gentleman had written.

Vandyck, the great painter of the Cavaliers—of Richmond with his

pensive melancholy expression, Strafford with his stern lofty look, Newcastle with his delicate, almost effeminate beauty—painted Montrose's picture more than once. The Great Marquis and Vandyck were friends, and in earlier days the former used to take delight in visiting the painter's studio, and watching him at his easel.

No Christian burial was afforded to the hero's corpse; it was taken down from the gallows, dismembered, and his limbs, like those of William Wallace, scattered among the chief towns of Scotland. Argyle had kept away during the whole of these proceedings, and had even shed tears on hearing of the execution—tears that not even his own friends could possibly have believed to be genuine. But Lorne, his son, shed no tears; he was standing by rejoicing over the horrid spectacle, and allowing his young wife to be present also. Montrose's mangled body was hastily interred in the Borough muir, the place where malefactors were buried, and night closed over the melancholy scene.

But not far from that spot stood the old castle of Merchistoun, from which the Lords Napier of Merchistoun take their name. Lady Napier and her children were there that night. At her command some of her domestics stole to the spot, opened the grave, and carefully took out the heart from the mutilated remains. She then caused it to be embalmed, and placed in a gold case, and sent it as a sacred relic of his murdered father to the youthful Marquis, who had made his escape and joined his cousin Lord Napier in Flanders.

We can well imagine how deeply our friend Archibald must have felt his beloved uncle's death. He recovered, indeed, from the shock, but his spirits were broken, and he died in the prime of manhood, before he was six and thirty, an exile in a foreign land.

And now my history is nearly concluded, one more scene relating to our hero I must describe before taking a reluctant leave of him.

You will have learnt from history that soon after the execution of the Great Marquis, Charles II. landed in Scotland, and the crown was placed on his head by Argyle.

He soon found he was more a prisoner than a king, and was not sorry when the battle of Dunbar, in which his Presbyterian generals were "smitten hip and thigh" by Cromwell, delivered him from his tyrants the Covenanters. A second defeat at Worcester obliged him to escape to France, and he became once more a wandering exile. It was

not till the 29th of May, 1660, that Charles was recalled to the throne of his ancestors, when he rode into London between his royal brothers, James and Henry, amidst the acclamations of his people. This event caused great changes in Scotland: the chiefs of the Covenant were imprisoned; Argyle and Johnstone of Warristoun tried and executed (the former beheaded, the latter hanged), and orders were sent to Edinburgh that the remains of the Marquis of Montrose should be honourably buried.

It was a bright and frosty day in January, 1661, that Edinburgh was again roused by the sound of trumpets and military music. That day the city-guard again marched out, not, as ten years before, to lead to execution the great and brave, but to do honour to his mouldering remains, by giving them Christian burial in holy ground.

Friends and relatives stood by an open grave in the churchyard of old St. Giles's, and amongst them might be seen the second Marquis and his brother, and a bright and handsome boy of eighteen, the young Lord Napier, son of Lord Archibald. Patrick Graham of Inchbrakie was there also; you will remember that he was the first to welcome Montrose and give him hospitality when he arrived alone in the Highlands, without power, without troops and with few friends. Inchbrakie had stood by his side on that glad and hopeful day when he was received with such enthusiastic delight by the Highland chiefs, and now he saw him laid in an honourable tomb. And as the remains were lowered into the vault, the cannon thundered from the castle, shaking the picturesque old town with "the reverberations of their splendid roar." It was a fitting military salvo over a soldier's dust.

And of the other actors in my story I think I have nothing left to tell, except that in all the gentle parts of his character the young Marquis much resembled his father; he would not meddle with any of the politics of the disturbed and stormy times that followed the Restoration, but lived chiefly on his estates in the country. He was indeed wanted there, for everything was in utter disorder; but gladly the tenants welcomed back the son of their ancient chiefs, and Montrose, the son of the Great Marquis, became so universally beloved and respected that he is known as the Good Marquis of Montrose.

(Concluded.)

EVENING HYMN.



GOD, Whose love embraces all,
 Most merciful, most holy;
 Thy tenderness with special care
 Enfolds the poor and lowly.
 One of Thy weakest children comes
 This night to seek Thy blessing,
 With contrite tears my countless sins
 And Thy dear grace, confessing.

The little flowers on every side
 For peaceful rest are closing,
 The children in their innocence
 With smiling lip reposing:
 My sleep cannot be sweet as theirs,
 Who for my sins am sighing;
 Yet grant me, for these sins of mine,
 To see my Saviour dying.

And as each day more plainly shows
 My foolishness, my blindness,
 Let me cling closer to the arm
 Of Thy strong loving-kindness:
 So, when the solemn evening comes,
 A rest to labour sending,
 Life, like a folding flower, shall close
 In joy and peace unending.

M. M. M.

THE MOUSE IN MY ROOM.



FOR many years I have not quite believed in the proverb, "Be it never so homely, there's no place like home." I have been compelled to leave its enjoyments to the snug circles I glimpse at round the firelight as I wend my way to my bachelor lodgings. It's a sad confession, and may draw down upon me the rebuke of my single brethren, but once inside my "room" all my faith in "home" is gone.

I am a literary man, living in one of those quiet retreats which are considered by romance readers as the abodes of the blameless and the happy. I spend my life in catering for the instruction and amusement of others, and ought, according to the same opinion, therein to find my own.

I have all the externals of ease and comfort—an easy chair which any lover of “ten minutes” after dinner would pronounce perfection, and a landlady who knows how to dust my room without upsetting my papers; and if I have few friends in the village, I have many on my bookshelves. And yet even in these snug quarters for many years I have sighed for some life. Brown and Robinson now and then ride over to dine, but when they go the solitude is more unbearable. I have often seriously thought of taking my writing materials into the stable, and sitting a while with my only companion in life. To hear Fanny crack a few beans, or draw the hay from the rack, seemed better than the solitude indoors. I was so desperate, that I almost envied the gentleman of the French Revolution, who bestowed all his attentions on a prison flower, when good luck sent me a companion, who has entirely changed the face of matters.

My landlady has a great, and, as I used to feel, a just abhorrence of vermin in her house, and some time since, when it was told her the mice had found their way to my cupboard and had eaten there whatever was eatable, she, very properly, as I thought, sent forthwith for the mason, who accordingly came the next day, stopped up the hole, and there, as we thought, the matter ended.

Not many nights after I was sitting in the firelight, between six and seven o'clock, just before the candles were brought, when I heard a slight scratching at the far end of the room. Such a little sound it was, as if a lady were writing lightly with a quill pen; but I knew there were no ladies there. I kept very still, leaning back in my chair, and looking in the direction from which the sound came. It stopped, and I almost thought I had been deceived in it; but, no, there it is again, on the floor. I lifted my eyes without at all changing my posture, and there first I saw my little friend the mouse. How quietly he had managed that piece of business! While I had been watching for his shadow on the floor, he had climbed to the very top of my chair, and was sitting there evidently making observations on me. I looked at him, and he looked at me. I was very still, so was

he; and there seemed every prospect of our becoming acquaintances at least, if not friends, when lo! in came my landlady with the tea, and a bright light on her tray. In a moment my friend saw his danger. Down he sprang to the carpet with a single bound, and vanished; not so quickly, however, but that the lady had both heard and seen him. She heard him fall, and caught the last faint shadow of him as he disappeared behind the wainscoting.

"Laws, sir! I ask your pardon—and did you see that there now? if there wasn't a mouse got right up top of the chair, and jumped off and ran into a hole, the minute I came in with the light."

I saw that all was lost; that it would be no use to try to persuade her that it was a mistake. She had seen all too plainly, and she was not the person to doubt her own eyesight. She had never read Bishop Berkeley, and the tendencies of her mind were not in that direction. I therefore contented myself with remarking, that so long as the mice were kept from the cupboard I should be quite satisfied. At the same time I secretly resolved that I would not allow any measures to be taken likely to deprive me of the visits of my new-found acquaintance.

All that evening passed, but although the room was very quiet, I neither saw nor heard anything more of my mouse. I examined the hole at which he had disappeared, and ventured to put a small piece of bread into it; but nothing would tempt him forth again that night, and in the morning I found my landlady had jammed a cork into it so tightly, that it was quite impossible for the strength of any unassisted mouse to move it. This contented me. The thing was now in my own hands, and I arranged my plans accordingly.

Of course there was nothing for it but to let everything remain as it was during the day. I might be sure that after such a shock as he had received on the previous evening, he would not venture to tempt the daylight so soon. So there I left him, not, however, without some anxiety as to how he would live, pent up there in the wall, in darkness and suffocation. But in the evening, the tea being removed, and everything being quiet again, I went to my friend's hole, and pulled out the cork. At the entrance I placed a small piece of cheese; a few inches further off I placed a larger piece, and on the chair a yet larger piece. Then I sat down to watch. Half an hour passed and not a sound—an hour, an hour and a half, and no sign of his return.

I had got quietly to my writing at the table, but looked that way sometimes as I sat. At last he came. I could see two bright beautiful eyes looking out at me from the hole. I cast mine back upon my writing table, and wrote on with just as much sound only as a mouse might make scratching. Presently when I looked again, he had got further into the room, and was eating my second piece of cheese. This was very hopeful. He was evidently gaining confidence, and we might be friends yet, so that I took care he should not again be disturbed. So I sat there very very still for a long time that evening, until, when he had eaten all the cheese, he went quietly back to the hole, and for that night I corked him up.

It is now six months since that night of our first acquaintance; and every night, with only one exception, when I was ill upstairs, I have put a piece of cheese for my little friend. And every night at about half-past nine he comes from his hole in the corner to eat it. My landlady knows I used not to be able to eat cheese on account of its being too heavy for my digestion; and she cannot at all understand how it is I have grown so venturesome. If I am ever ailing, she thinks it is the cheese I eat; but I hold my peace.

The mouse and I have grown very familiar. He never keeps me waiting more than a minute or two after I have opened his hole. If I put the cheese on my table he will run up to eat it. If I light my lamp he is not afraid. If I walk across the room he does not run away. Only one thing I have to guard against—and that is not to let the door be opened. I think to this day he must remember my landlady's appearance, although he cannot be supposed to have understood her remarks. However that may be, if by any chance the door should be opened he disappears for that evening and seems more cautious for a while.

I am very fond of this mouse—so fond am I that after half-past nine in the evening (the time at which I pull out the cork), "home is home" to me. I look out for his appearance. I watch his little tricks. I admire his eyes, and his long graceful tail. I wonder at him when he sweeps like a shadow across the room, or climbs to the chair seeming hardly to touch it, or leaps down from a height of twenty times his own length, as though he were a spirit. I have tried to argue myself out of this fondness by reminding myself that he is only a mouse. I remember that the last novel is on my shelf, and


that I might read and see what becomes of the poor girl who was to have been married and was not; and of the man who ought to have married her, and who married some one else. But although these characters may interest me at some other part of the day, my interest in them does not seem so real and warm as it is in this little living thing in my presence. I instruct myself that, now my work is done, I might write a letter to a friend, and so pass the last lonely evening hour. But my friend seems to be a great way off, and writing the letter presents itself as a toil to me, whereas this curious little trusting thing is creeping at my very feet, and seems to beseech me to enter into more familiar relations with him.

That "it is not good for man to be alone" is true at least in the same sense in which we may say it is not good for man to hunger and be in want. But there are some circumstances in which hunger and want are better than fulness and plenty—if with the fulness and plenty we must have too something else which we feel to be *worse* than hunger and want. So although for all men it may not, as a rule, be good to be alone, yet for some men it may be the *best*. Each man arrives at his own conclusion in this matter by the time he is thirty years of age, and decides what is good for him; a decision that is influenced not a little by his memory of "the days that are no more," and of one face that used to haunt him when he was eighteen. I have come to my decision, good reader, in this matter; and although I shall never know what "home" is, in the sense which perhaps you do, I am nevertheless very thankful every evening for the kind and timid friendship of the mouse in my parlour.

ARTHUR LEIGH.



MORE "BLACKFELLOW YARNS."

 ONE day, while Jem and I were on the coast station together, Jem happened to leave his carbine under a tree while he went back to the hut to fetch some tobacco; when he returned it was gone, and there were the blackfellow's tracks, showing plainly who had taken it.

For days after that we used to find pieces of the gun lying about the run, and placed apparently in places where we could not help seeing them. One day we found part of the stock lying close to the hut, then the barrel, bent double, lying on the edge of the creek, and so on. The blacks about here were not so timid as some other tribes, because they had sometimes had shipwrecked sailors among them; notably one who was with them nineteen years, and afterwards lived four years as sexton of the church in one of the northern ports. During his sojourn with the blacks he had become just like one of themselves. When he was wrecked he had some fellow sailors with him, but these had all died of fevers, and he had been adopted by the tribe, who had never seen a white man before.

After nineteen years, the district began to be occupied by the whites, and one day, while out hunting, after the blackfellow fashion, he came near the place where two men were building a paddock fence. He went and sat on one of the rails and watched them. They, mistaking him for a blackfellow, were going to fire at him, when he exclaimed, "Don't shoot, I British *object*." You see that he had been so long among the blacks, that he had partly forgotten his own language. After some difficulty the two men persuaded him to come into the hut, and eventually he was sent down to Port Denison, where he was made sexton, as I told you, and also had a situation given him in the custom-house.

He wrote a pamphlet, giving the story of those nineteen years, which contained much interesting information about the habits of the blackfellows. His name, as well as I remember, was James Morrell.

• After stealing the gun, the blackfellows began to get bolder, and took away two or three old tin jam-pots that were lying about the

hut. We found out afterwards that they had made tips to their spears out of them. But one day, while we were out, they came into the hut, and stole about a dozen old glass bottles and a bag of flour.

The next evening we put the sheep in the yard a little earlier than usual, and went out to see if we could not frighten the blacks away. My gun was still left, and Jem had a revolver.

We tracked them till we came on their camp, in the middle of a scrub. We knew that it was there by the smoke hanging over it, and the number of eaglehawks and crows which were sailing about. The scrub was made up of thick patches of bushes three or four feet apart, between which the ground was perfectly bare, and full of ants. In the middle there was a large open space, where there was a waterhole, and there it was that the blackfellows had encamped. By creeping up cautiously, we were able to get within about a hundred and twenty yards of their camp, and we soon had a view of what they were doing. We had heard for some time a strange noise that we could not account for. By peeping through the branches, we now perceived that the old gins were sitting on the ground, and smashing up all the glass bottles with "nullahs," while the men were rubbing one another all over with flour—our flour, which they had stolen.

The whole sight was so ridiculous that we both of us roared with laughter—though not loud enough for the blacks to hear us. I suppose they must have had some idea that they were turning themselves into white men; they evidently did not know the use of the flour.

We now consulted as to what was to be done. Jem was for shooting one or two of them, but I did not like the idea of doing that. Just as we were arguing the point, a wild turkey, followed by a whole brood of gobblers, stalked along one of the narrow strips of bare ground. The opportunity was too good to let slip, so Jem took the old bird, being the largest mark, with a bullet from his revolver, while I knocked over two of the young ones with my gun, which was loaded with duck-shot. As soon as we had picked them up we reloaded, and walked down to the blackfellows' camp. The blacks, of course, had vanished at the noise of firing.

There were about a dozen little bark huts, about three feet high, arranged in a circle, and at the door of each hut there was a fire, and some large stones for cooking. The blacks had been so taken by surprise that they had left everything behind them—spears, toma-

hawks, nets, "dilly-bags" (used for carrying provisions) and bits of honeycomb, pieces of fish and lily-roots, the remnants of a meal.

Generally, when white men find a blackfellows' camp like this, they take away as many things from it as they can carry, just as an English school-boy robs a bird's nest.

We, however, just contented ourselves with leaving our tracks in the camp, as a gentle hint to the blacks that they had better not interfere with us any more; and we took our flour-bag.

The blacks must have been very pleased on coming back to find their camp undisturbed. The next day we saw some of them in the distance, and they waved green boughs to us in token of friendship. We had several good meals off the turkeys, and as the weather was not very hot they kept for several days.

In the evening, as once before, we amused one another with black-fellow yarns.

"These coast blacks, after all, are not half bad fellows," said Jem, as we sat smoking by the fire; "now up farther north they're much worse. I remember once I had to 'hump my drum' (i.e. carry my blankets on my back), up the 'Flinders' road. There the darkies are very thick; and they would kill a man, and no mistake, if they got a chance. I thought they had me once. I had no firearms when I started, but after a day or two I overtook a German chap, who seemed a decentish fellow, and we chummed in together. He had a rusty old carbine slung on his back, and he used to 'blow' (brag or bluster) very much about what he would do if the blackfellows came against us. I wanted to get the thing and see whether it was properly loaded and fit for service, but the old fellow would never let it out of his own keeping.

"Well, one night we camped at one of the crossings of 'Betts's Gorge'—it crosses the road forty-two times—and I knew that we ought to keep a bright look out here, as very few persons travelled the road, except the mail-man once a fortnight; and the blacks had tried to 'stick him up.' We found a hole dug there where he had lighted his fire, so that the darkies might not see the blaze; and we lighted ours in the same place, and when we had had supper, moved off about a hundred yards away, for only new chums sleep by their fire, and unstrapped our blankets. Just before turning in for the night, I took a look round to see all right, and saw down in the creek a glowing streak of light creeping slowly nearer. I told the German.

"'Bah!' he said, without taking his pipe out, 'him only ze little virevly.' But I knew it was not a firefly; it was too red for that; it was a 'firestick,' carried by a darkie. They make 'em out of two pieces of dry iron bark clapped together, which burn like tinder. Presently I saw two more; and, to make me quite certain, the foremost fellow began to whirl his round his head, when it burst into a flame.

"Blackfellows don't often stir out at night, but when they do they mean mischief. They always carry firesticks with them at night, to keep away the 'Devil, devil.' They are as much afraid of darkness as children.

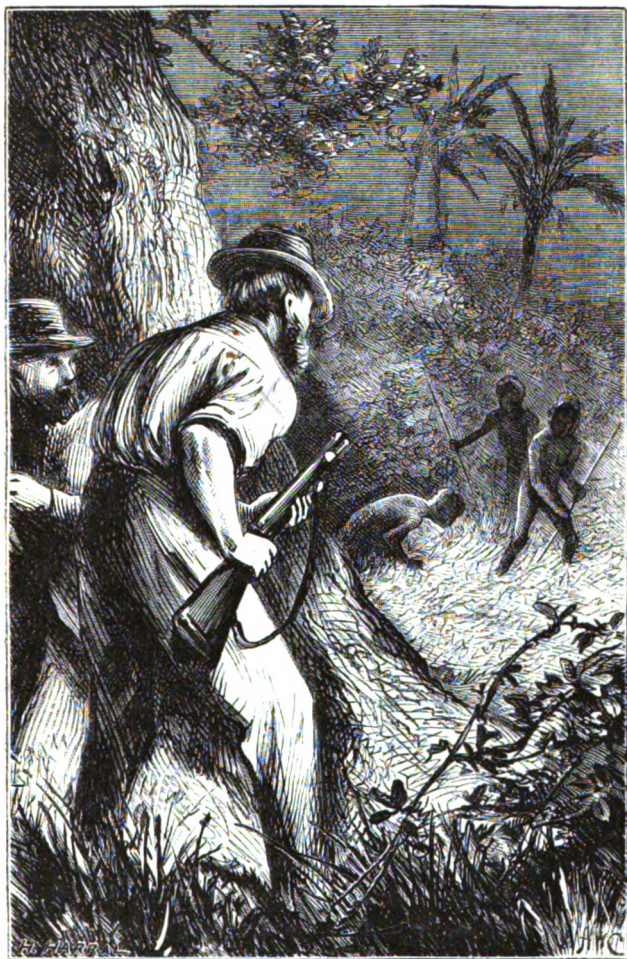
"Presently I counted half a dozen of these firesticks, and all coming our way. When the German felt sure that they were really darkies, he was in a blue funk. I never saw such an awful coward in my life. He began to shake worse than if he had the ague, and when he muttered German to himself, many a word seemed as if it would choke him. There was no help of any kind to be expected from a man like that; so I made him get behind me, and keep quiet, while I took hold of his carbine.

"When the firesticks came up to the crossing, they all stopped and clustered together, and soon they came up the bank on our side. As they stepped up into the lighter space, I could see their bodies, though not very clearly, for there was only just a little streak of a moon. I could see that they were stooping down, and 'running' our tracks. These brought them, of course, to the place where our fire had been.

"This they examined carefully, and then spread out again to look for tracks. I judged that there might be twenty of them. They came nearer to where we lay, and I got ready the old carbine, but I was very doubtful whether it would be of any use, and it seemed likely enough to burst. There was a big bony fellow at the head of the darkies, who must have been six feet high, who was especially active in the search, stooping down and feeling for tracks with his hands, and constantly waving his firestick along the ground. None of the darkies made any kind of noise. They were about fifty yards away by this time, and I steadied the carbine against a tree, and covered the big fellow who was foremost.

"I knew that if I hit him, all the rest would cut their stick—if only the old carbine would go off. The German had seen as much as I had, and I heard his knees knocking together behind me. When he saw the blacks coming nearer, he began to make a series of short

panting or moaning noises. I turned and whispered. Then he caught hold of my arm, 'Oh, mein vrend, mein vrend!' I turned round and spoke low: 'If you're not quiet, mein vrend, I'll shoot you.'



"I still kept my aim at the big nigger, ready to fire if he came ten yards nearer. You see, as long as they didn't find us out we were safe, but if we had moved we might have run right into them, for the others were not far away.

"I had taken the precaution, in moving away from the fire, to cross a piece of rocky ground, which would not bear so many traces. When the black fellows came to this they were puzzled, for although they might have managed it by day, it was too much for them by night.

"They left off tracking, and began to hunt for us anyhow. I forced the German down on his back, and motioned him to be still. I drew close up to my tree, keeping it between myself and the darkies. There was now every chance that they might miss us; as it was, they passed within twenty yards, and struck away in another direction. We had camped in a little clump of trees, with long grass all round, so that we were pretty well concealed.

"In a few minutes they came back again, and went off down the creek in the direction from which they had come. They may have thought we were gone on, or perhaps they intended to pay us another visit in the gray of the morning—the time they generally choose—but as soon as they were gone we cleared out of that pretty quick, I can tell you, and kept walking along the road nearly all night. Most of the 'blowing' had been taken out of the German, and I was so disgusted with him that we hardly spoke to one another. As to his old carbine, we tried in the morning to make it go off, but we couldn't anyhow, so it was lucky that we had not required to use it."

"I was nearly shooting a white man in mistake for a blackfellow once," said I, "when I was down on the Lower Burdekin. I was in a hut by myself, at the foot of one of the hills, and I used to see the darkies' fires all round at night, and sometimes hear them shouting to one another, but they never did any harm to me, or I to them. Well, one day the stockman from the station happened to pass my way, and among other things he said to me:

"'Ain't you frightened to stay here all alone?'

"'Frightened of what?' said I.

"'Why, of the darkies,' said he.

"'No,' I said; 'I've got a rifle from the station; and, besides, it wouldn't do any good to be frightened. If my time comes to get killed, being frightened wouldn't help me.'

"'Well, good day.' So he galloped off, and I was left with the sheep.

"One evening, about a week after this, I was sitting by the fire, as usual, when I fancied I saw a spark of fire moving out in the bush. I watched it a little, and it came gradually nearer. Sometimes it

disappeared, as if passing behind a tree or bush. Well, I could only suppose it was one thing—a blackfellow's firestick—so I went in and got my rifle, which was already loaded. The light came steadily on—it seemed to be about two feet from the ground. I rested my elbow on a log, and took aim at it, and it soon got so close that I sung out, 'Who's there?' No answer.

"'Who's there? or I shall fire!' No answer. So I steadied myself as well as I could, and fired.

"'I say, mate, that's rather above a joke!' said the voice of the stockman out of the darkness, and he himself soon walked up. It appeared that he had intended to creep up close to the hut and then startle me with a yell.

"'Your ball hit a tree not many inches away from my head. But how did you know which way to shoot? I reckoned you wouldn't know when you hailed, so I did not answer.'

"'Why, I fired at the light you carried.'

"'What light?' he cried; 'I carried no light.'

"'What do you call that?' I said, pointing to his pipe, which still remained in his mouth.

"'Ah! I forgot that.'

"'He had no business to have tried such a trick on,' said Jem, "and it would have served him right if you had shot him."

"Well, perhaps it would, but I was not sorry that I missed him."

Soon after this we turned in for the night.

Jem and I remained together for a good while, and we were always capital friends, and I was very sorry when I parted with him. It is a very melancholy thing, parting with a man with whom you have lived for months in solitary companionship, especially if you know that in all probability you will never meet him again in this life. There was nothing very remarkable about Jem either; he was profoundly ignorant on many subjects; he was not very choice in his language or actions; and yet there grew up a feeling of good-fellowship between us that amounted to affection.

It is most likely that if I were to meet him in England now I should not recognise him, and if I did I dare say that he would seem to me a vulgar, common person, and not at all the sort of person to associate with. But I do not like to think thus of my old comrade. I prefer to picture him as I always found him—the brave, honest, handy

Jem—yes, honest in its truest meaning—my "Bushland tutor," for I was but a raw hand when first I knew him. And thinking of him so, I do not wish, in my changed life, to see him again.

When Jem had got about forty pounds due to him, he went down to Sydney to have a spree, as he called it; and as the lambs were now strong enough to travel, another man was sent down to help to bring them back to the head station. This man was an oddity in his way. He had been a lieutenant in the army, and had come out to Sydney and entered the native police. He did not stay long in this employment, when he obtained a situation under government. All these chances in life he had lost because he was such a fearful drunkard, and now he was a simple shepherd, and likely to remain so as long as he was fit for that duty. All this I knew by report, for he was a noted character in the district, and known by the name of "The General." His father was a major in the artillery, and I have since met him in England, but without alluding in any way to his son, who was a sad rascal. His father used to send him fifty pounds a year, believing that he was doing well in the colonies; and, in order that this supply might not be cut off, "The General" used to write home long letters describing his station, the number of men he employed, &c.

This allowance, as well as all he could earn, he used to spend in drink, and very often the public-house keepers gave him credit, so that he spent it before it came at all.

He had been at a public school—Rugby, I think, he told me; so that he was tolerably well educated.

He was not by any means a bad fellow in the bush, where he could not get any drink; but one or two glasses of grog made a complete savage of him, and he never stopped drinking until he had neither money nor anything worth money in his possession. This is not at all uncommon in the colonies: men will often exchange their horse, blankets, and even their spare clothes, for one or two glasses of bad spirit, and then walk away destitute, to work hard for more money, to be spent in the same way.

"The General" used to stammer frightfully; and, as he was very fond of talking, this defect was especially noticeable. A favourite boasting speech of his was that he had "C—c—c—arried the Queen's c—c—c—olours into the Redan b—b—attery, and b—b—uried the dead afterwards!" At present, however, he did not look much like it, nor did I

ever know any instance of his distinguishing himself for bravery, though he had the chance more than once.

We had to take the sheep about forty miles, which we expected to do in about nine days. We had to camp out four or five times; and at other halting-places there were stations, where we could get the loan of an old yard for the night. As these were all cattle stations just now, there was not so much fear of losing the sheep or getting them mixed with others.

We used to start at daybreak, and let the sheep feed pretty much as they liked, only taking care that they did not go in the wrong direction, and hunt up the stragglers.

At the first station we came to, "The General" begged a sheet of paper and an envelope, and wrote a letter to his father, which he showed me. It was something like this:—

"MY DEAR FATHER,—You will be very glad to hear that I have had a most successful shearing, and that, what with the present year's increase, and the prudent expenditure of a little money, I have now on my run upwards of seven thousand sheep."

He then went on to give other details, and to relate anecdotes; and signed himself "Ever your loving son."

"P.S.—Thank you for the money, which was very acceptable."

I believe that a great many of the fortunes which we hear of in England, as being made in Australia, are made in this way.

When we got to the head station, I parted with "The General" for a time, not expecting much to see him any more. I had suddenly grown tired of shepherding, and I felt as if a change of occupation would do me good; but all choice in the matter was taken away from me in the following way.

I was suddenly smitten with one of the plagues of Queensland—the "sandy blight." This is an affection of the eyes, which is very common in the summer, and caused partly by the heat and glare and partly by the myriads of flies which are constantly buzzing about one's face. It is excessively painful, and very often takes away the sight altogether for a time. So, instead of feeling strong and hearty as I had felt the day before, I lay groaning and half-blind in the stranger's hut, with a large cloth over my head to keep the light and the flies away. Oh, those flies! I could write a chapter about them. I never

thoroughly understood the misery of the Egyptians until I went to Queensland. They are bad enough when a man is in good health. What would you think of lifting a spoonful of soup to your mouth, and finding it full—yes, full! of black flies before it reached you? The only chance of getting a comfortable meal is to eat nothing but dry food, such as damper and cold beef, on which the flies will alight without sticking; gravy becomes in one minute a conglomeration of flies and grease. Even the best of eyes would give up reading in despair, in the middle of the day. How can a man read with any comfort when he has four flies continually in each eye, crawling over one another, and fighting for possession of the corners. The most sensible course is to let them alone, and make the best of it, for you will find that it is a useless labour trying to drive them away.

You can imagine, then, what an infliction these flies must be when your eyes are inflamed and sore. For two days I lay in the darkest corner of the hut and groaned. Nobody took any notice of me, nobody seemed to pity me, but that is only the fashion of the country; besides, these sore eyes were too common for pity.

Now the owner of the station had erected a grog-shop about seven miles off, on some cross-roads, and he had no tenant for it at present. The consequence was, that men that camped there used to pull down parts of the house to light their fires.

He had been trying to get some one to go and live there to take care of the place, but all the men seemed to be better employed. He now came to me, and asked me if I would go out, as it was impossible that I should do any work till my eyes got well, and I could rest them out there just as well as where I was. He promised to give me a pound a week and my rations, and he went out himself with me, on horseback, to show me the way, for I could not see many yards in front of me.

The house was a kind of large shed, built of slabs, and had only two rooms. There was nothing in it at all, except a litter of old jam-pots, bottles, and scraps of paper. The squatter, having first shown me where to find the water, in a pool about twenty yards away, rode off and left me. I collected all my possessions and made my bed, and lay down and covered my eyes up. After a little while I dropped asleep.

I got on pretty well for a day or two, though my eyes did not get much better. It was rather dull, as I had no occupation of any kind,

and I was afraid to move any distance from the house for fear of losing myself. It was only in the daytime that I was lonely, as in the evening I was sure to have one or two travellers to stay with me—usually men looking for work.

One evening the postman came by on horseback, and had letters for me, as it happened—letters from home; but it was no use having letters, I couldn't read them, although I tried ever so long. I could not make 'out a single line, and only made my eyes worse to no purpose. I was very vexed, for I had not had any news from England for nine or ten months. The next day I could hardly see at all, not even enough to go and get water, so that I had to trust to the travellers for that. It was very pleasant to have company every evening; but the provisions that had been left with me were soon exhausted, and no one came to me with any more. I suppose they expected me to walk in and fetch them, but the state of my eyes prevented me from doing that, so that I was fixed there, and forced to depend for everything on the help of any one who chanced to pass; and very often these people expected to get their supper from me. The station to which I belonged lay off the regular track of these travellers, or I could have sent in a message by one of them. This was a terrible difficulty. It was quite evident that I could not stay where I was; but I used generally to find that when I was utterly perplexed something or other would sure to turn up, and so it was in this case.

One night there arrived a party bound for the diggings, which had lately been discovered, and as they had a spare horse, they agreed to take me with them. I was very glad of the chance, as it was out of the question stopping where I was, if by any possibility I could get away. So we started the next morning pretty early.

I thought that very likely the change of air might do my eyes good. As it was, I could not see which way we were going, but my horse, which was a steady old stager, kept the road with the rest.

As we had to drive several packhorses, loaded with tents, tools, and provisions, we did not get on very fast, and only went fifteen miles the first day.

In a day or two my eyes began to get better, and by the time we reached our destination they were almost well. I now found myself, for the first time, on the diggings; about which I must tell you something in another paper.

GEORGE CARRINGTON.